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— Joseph E. Imbriac

THE

Commonweal

The Changing Commonwealth

by Michael P. Fogarty

Vernon Lee, a Lonely Lady

by Anne Fremantle

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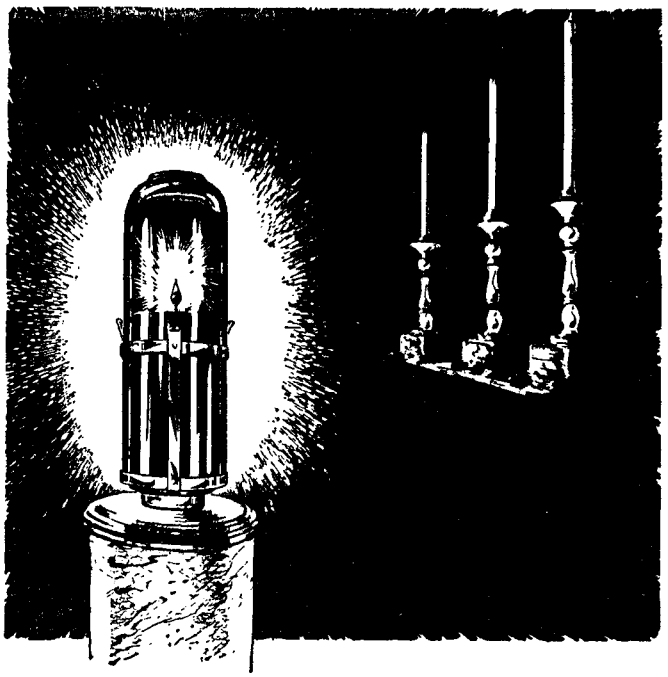

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

Foreign Policy in a Vacuum

THE conference at Geneva collapses like a circus tent at midnight. It was the greatest Western diplomatic failure in the cold war.

The conference had slim chances when it opened. Those chances were thrown away by the United States Government. We had generous assistance in causing the failure from the relentlessly irresponsible French parliament and the Micawberish British Foreign Office. But if the British were incorrigibly optimistic about the prospect of a cease-fire, they at least had a policy, which is a compliment that cannot be paid to the United States. If the French were irresponsible, such was to be expected from a nation so loaded with the debts of recent history; and what chance the French had to act forcefully was incredibly destroyed by the United States.

The power situation at the beginning of the conference was a deteriorating one for France. Losing the Indochina war, France still had enough military strength to deny complete victory in the north of Viet Nam to the Communists. France still had a slight chance to kindle popular opposition to Communism in the state of Viet Nam.

When the conference began, the United States was in a position of considerable power, which it failed to exploit. The failure of American leadership resulted from an essentially unrealistic political and military policy, adopted a year ago for domestic political reasons. (While no democratic nation can carry on a foreign policy unacceptable to its people —as the present situation in France so grandly illustrates—there is no proof that the people of the United States would not have supported a realistic program; there is, in fact, every reason to think that, given leadership, they would have done so with the fortitude with which they have responded to each of the steps we have taken since 1945.)

The unrealistic policy which we adopted was the intellectually cheap proposition that we could stabilize the cold war by making an unenforceable threat. The policy of "massive retaliation," a development of the Fortress America idea, has been at the heart of American foreign policy under the Republican Administration.

The falseness of this basic policy did not prevent us from doing good and necessary things—indeed it forced us to compensate for the flaw. We continued to reinforce our NATO alliance in Europe. We made pacts with Pakistan and Korea, operated the Berlin food plan, and brilliantly organized and conducted the Berlin conference.

We did some other things which were not so admirable. Through a failure of domestic leadership we permitted a malicious demagogue to parade to the watching world the worst that is in us. We handed over to small-minded people responsibility for our immigration and visa organizations, and gave them, through a failure of domestic leadership, a shoddy and selfish law to administer. We let our fears and uncertainties about internal security corrupt our honor.

MOST frightening, we failed to give atomic and hydrogen weapons an intelligible and honest role in our military policy. Compelled to plan for the use—indeed for the initiation, if necessary—of nuclear weapons in a possible war with Russia, we failed to do the things in our power to confine their possible use to military targets. And yet some among us have complained bitterly about neutralism in the target cities of France and Great Britain, and in India and Japan!

We have so reduced our conventional military forces—for political reasons—that if we are compelled to enter a peripheral war we will very likely initiate the use of nuclear weapons for lack of any other means of fighting that war. We have implied that we may wilfully use atomic weapons against the pitifully undefended and crowded cities of Asia. And certain people among us rail at non-Commu-

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nist Asian leaders because they still distrust us!

The situation in Southeast Asia was never open to an easy solution. It is to the credit of the United States that we stubbornly and decently tried to alter French colonial policy in Indochina. Failing in that, we are hardly responsible for the terrible problems of this spring. Mr. Dulles had a dying patient on his hands when he took office. His efforts to save Indochina have been admirable—up to the beginning of the Geneva conference. What has happened since then has been incomprehensible. We have had speeches from the President, the Vice-President, and the Secretary of State. No one speech has wholly agreed with any other one. We have hinted intervention and we have denied intervention. We have established impossible conditions for intervention and then withdrawn conditions.

The only chance of peace at Geneva was to regularize a stalemate. Only the threat of American intervention would have given M. Bidault and Premier Laniel the power to demand a cease-fire on reasonable terms. And only the fear of American intervention would have influenced the Viet Minh to accept.

At the dramatic moment in this contest, the United States announced to the world that we would not intervene in Indochina. Mr. Dulles added a wholly unnecessary threat about the French failure to act on EDC, thus stabbing Laniel twice when once would have been sufficient. The French cabinet fell, the Geneva conference failed, and the Communists prepared for a final offensive. This was not diplomacy, it was immolation.

To have calculated the events at Geneva, and quietly to have let it be known that the United States would intervene if absolutely necessary, might have forced a situation where we would have been compelled to carry out our threat. As the Administration leaders have been unwilling to put the danger to the American people in frank language, they backed down at Geneva, and abandoned M. Bidault to his fate. The result is that we may yet have to intervene, for the Communists will not settle now for less than total victory in north Viet Nam, and we have thrown away every advantage. We have perversely refused either to have our cake *or* to eat it.

And the analysis always comes back to the basic unsoundness of the massive retaliation policy. We may be absolutely sure that the Communists will continue infiltration, fifth-column activities and insurrection; we may be equally sure that they will not, barring a grave mistake, commit an act of overt aggression such as would unite the free nations behind American retaliation. They therefore stand invited to continue half-sized aggression, secure in the knowledge that the United States has no means to oppose them which would be acceptable to America's allies, to the non-Communist nations of Asia, or indeed, to a united American public.

We Americans are at present unable to scale our reply to Soviet aggression to the size and character of the aggression. We have an all-or-nothing defense, and as the first alternative is intolerable as a reply to creeping aggression, we are left with nothing.

The line in Southeast Asia has been broken. It must be drawn once again, perhaps in mid-Indochina, perhaps on the borders of Burma and Thailand. When it is drawn, one supposes that it will be guaranteed by some kind of an alliance including, at the minimum, the British, Australasians, Thais, and Filipinos.

The only possible solution has as its first element a military guarantee scaled to the threat. That means infantry, trained in guerrilla operations, supported by airborne troops and tactical air power. But a Communist movement which has real native support can fight on forever against conventional military power—as we have learned in Indochina. The root solution is to win popular support for the non-Communist government. Mr. Dulles' most recent speeches have made this point, and indeed all of American policy in Indochina since 1945 has been based on it. If a popular Communist movement is virtually unconquerable, in the short run at least, it is equally true that an alien Communist uprising, unsupported by outside troops, is likely at most to be only a harassment. Burma, the Philippines and Malaya have indicated that. The lesson is obvious.

Mr. Dulles has stated the need for native support in Indochina. Next in importance is the need to win at least the respect of the existing non-Communist governments of South Asia. The British have the trust of India. Ceylon and Pakistan have moved closer to our viewpoint, and as the Communists expand are likely to come much closer.

Calmness now, generosity and forbearance in dealing with those nations, economic and technical aid to meet the social problem of Southeast Asia. can build up behind the military screen a bloc of independent people in sympathy with the tenets of the civilization (if not the nationalism) we defend. In this is the hope for Southeast Asia. Unless we do these things—do them immediately and imaginatively—we can expect a new crisis within the next year. And the next crisis may be the final one. We are very close to seeing all Asia captured by the Communists. And if Communist China controls Asia we will have lost the cold war.

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GERMAN PROSPECT

DR. Konrad Adenauer, prime minister of the West German republic, has long enjoyed the reputation of being the most able statesman in Western Europe. He is likewise a man of vigorous health, although advanced in years. Americans have therefore come to feel that as long as he was around, and in office, there need be few fears for the stability of Western Germany, or the solidity of her support of the democratic cause.

Not the least of Dr. Adenauer's many accomplishments was the lining up of his at first diffident people behind the idea of a European Union. The extent of his victory at the polls last September was a sweeping vindication of his European policy. Meanwhile the German economy has continued to forge ahead at great strides, despite the burden of the refugees, so that German products could be found all over Europe and throughout the globe.

The first big dent in the Adenauer foreign policy was inflicted early this year at the Berlin conference. This was caused by placing excessive hopes upon certain American assertions; the German people had come to believe that this country was strong enough to impel the Soviet Union to agree to a unification of Germany that would also permit her integration into the general European community. That was the first blow.

Now, much more recently, the French have all but sealed the verdict by refusing to ratify the European Defense Community—with its European army—and the Bonn agreements. In other words it has become painfully clear that the Adenauer foreign policy is not getting anywhere. From various influential German quarters have come proposals of alternatives involving various degrees of treating with Soviet Russia. Dr. Heinrich Bruening, chancellor in the early nineteen thirties, is among those who are openly counseling this new tack.

Certain observers are of the opinion that Dr. Adenauer is so closely identified with the EDC policy that he will battle the Free Democratic segment of his ruling coalition, and all dissident political adversaries, for the cause he has so skillfully advanced. Others, basing their estimate on the German leader's skill and political flexibility, believe that he will incline with the current. They tend to surmise that he may already have inspired, or at best countenanced, these counter-proposals. They believe that he will be able to maintain his leadership undisputed by blaming the failure of recent German policy on France and the United States for reasons intimated above.

Of the two chief alternatives that remain should the European Defense Community be definitively repudiated, it would appear that most Germans would favor reunion and neutralization to an outright military alliance with the United States. They are not eager for trouble. They need the food production of East Germany. Unification would deeply gratify certain patriotic sentiments. Therefore if the Soviet Union should be able to visualize the advantages of such an arrangement and agree peacefully to withdraw, a neutralized Germany might somehow actually result. In any case, within a year of the major uprising in the Soviet Zone, the failings of the Atlantic Powers have given the USSR a new opportunity in Germany.

THE FACE IN THE MIRROR

IT is interesting that Senator McCarthy's most public (and publicized) showdown did not involve the Senator *versus* that bloc of American opinion which has consistently warned against McCarthyism for the past three or four years. The televised hearings, rather, have been McCarthy *versus* a group of Republican leaders who made every effort to appease and mollify the man whose demands are apparently insatiable. Mr. Stevens' case was inevitably compromised by the concessions he had made to Senator McCarthy and his own early indecisiveness and foolish belief that by "playing along" he could save the honor of the Army and avoid the very showdown that subsequently filled television screens for weeks on end.

If, as it is often said, Mr. Stevens' cause was muddied from the beginning, it was due to the fact that he learned too late that he who "plays along" with Joe McCarthy must expect to go home without his marbles. And such are the Junior Senator's ethics that Mr. Stevens' very appeasement was used against him. It was as if Adolf Hitler were charging Neville Chamberlain at the Nuremberg trials because Chamberlain once hoped against hope for peace in our time.

There will be no clear-cut, black-and-white outcome of the hearing. His foolish appeasement cast a film over Stevens' testimony. But the hearings have not been vain if only because they revealed as nothing else could the nature of McCarthy and McCarthyism. The smear approach started right off the first day when General Reber's testimony was questioned because of something that had to do with his brother—who denied the charges made against him but never had a chance to clear his name. At that distant date, McCarthy hinted strongly that Reber's testimony was not the truth but the product of vindictiveness. In the weeks that followed, various persons, one by one, were named

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as the real culprits, "masterminds" who for obscure, unpatriotic reasons cooked up this plot to discredit a put-upon enemy of Communism. There were so many it is difficult to recall them all: first, Mr. Stevens and Mr. Adams (not, the Senator kept saying, the Army), then Mr. Struve Hensel, Assistant Secretary of Defense, then Sherman Adams, Presidential Assistant, and other top Administration figures, then Joseph Alsop (pronounced Alslop) and other Washington newsmen, then Clark M. Clifford and Senator Symington and Democrats in general. The McCarthy world abounds in villains and every few days some new person was named as the one true genius, the "mastermind" behind the Army charges.

There was the dramatic incident when a young Boston attorney was prepared for the sacrificial slaughter: Mr. Welch cried out his disgust and the room broke into applause but Senator McCarthy remained pitifully incomprehending of why a word for human decency deserved applause. The young Boston attorney and his family perhaps were saved by the incident from the fate that has overcome others who had to be sacrificed on the altar of McCarthyism. In any case, Mr. Welch gave eloquent voice to the compacts, traditions and laws we live by—and Senator McCarthy did not even seem to know what he had done wrong.

There was the justification of the "young Army Intelligence officer" who passed on classified information without authorization. It was then that the essential anarchy of the McCarthy position was frozen into dogma—"I am the law!"

There were many similar incidents to betray the mood, morals and methods of the thing called McCarthyism. The skillful evasions; the calculated digressions; in the first days the endless points of order to fog up issues every time they were about to be brought in clear focus; the use of anti-Communism as a personal weapon (those one hundred thirty—or is it one hundred and thirty-five, Roy?—in the defense factories, who were forgotten about as soon as it was suggested that perhaps someone other than McCarthy might be able to do something about them); there was the adroit use of Sudden Fear ("There is a serious situation in the CIA" coming abruptly one day)—Joe McCarthy was on his best behavior but the man on the television screens was the one we have been talking about since 1950.

We have always deemed McCarthyism as a moral problem. To use a familiar phrase, that hard fact should be crystal-clear now to everyone who has seen him in action throughout these hearings. They need no further warnings from us. If the McCarthy they have seen is the McCarthy they want, it would seem to be a natural, almost inevitable mating. In that case, we are afraid, they deserve each other.

CLASSIC EXAMPLE

IT finally happened. For years, sociology teachers in Catholic high schools and colleges have been telling students that the uninitiated would label as Communistic certain passages from the papal social encyclicals if only the papal authorship was not disclosed. Now Representative Wayne L. Hays of Ohio has put the matter to the test during a Congressional hearing on charges that the tax-free foundations favor left-wing causes, and it worked. When he presented a judicial selection from Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI without giving his source, Representative Hays received this comment from an "expert" witness: "All of them are closely comparable to Communist literature that I have read. They parallel very closely Communistic or socialistic ideas."

The success of Representative Hays' little demonstration is really not too surprising. It has long been obvious that many well-intentioned people see complex social and economic questions in oversimplified and often misleading terms. On the one hand they see some theoretical (and, in reality, nonexistent) system of unadulterated capitalistic free-enterprise, out of Adam Smith by way of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. On the other, or far-left, side they see Communism, and they identify with Communism all talk about guaranteed annual wages, free and democratic labor unions, health insurance, unemployment compensation, activities on behalf of interracial justice, and the like. For them, there simply are no in-betweens.

All this adds up to seeing the social question in pathetically simple terms, of course. Yet Representative Hays' little experiment has again demonstrated that such people are around, some of them in positions of considerable influence. In Catholic circles, this careless identification of good causes with Communism has for years been alternately laughed at and wept over. Such social myopia obviously plays into the hands of the Communists, since it gives Communism credit for many good ideas which are really not its property. This is harm enough. Equally importantly, those who oppose Communism because they think it stands for measures like the guaranteed annual wage are themselves not likely to be much help in the long-range struggle against Communism. Certainly, such an attitude does not indicate a very deep understanding of the nature of the threat that confronts the world.

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The Changing Commonwealth

"IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE COMMONWEALTH AS A WHOLE WOULD BE A STRONGER AND MORE USEFUL FORCE IF ITS COMPONENTS ACTED MORE ON THEIR OWN."

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

I GREW up into a world in which there was a Great Power named the British Commonwealth. It was great in the usual power-political sense; that is, it had a decisive influence in matters of peace and war, and incidentally also on the world economy. And its greatness rested upon three conditions.

First, it held in each of the areas of the world where serious disputes were likely to arise—in Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East—positions of military, economic, and political power, and of social prestige, such as to put it in the same class as any other, even the strongest, Power in that area.

Secondly, its positions of power in these areas were linked together so as to form one strong and mutually-reinforcing whole. A world power with weak communications can be attacked and destroyed in detail. But the British Commonwealth's communications were not weak. Commonwealth forces dominated central and southern Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Western Atlantic, the Red Sea and key areas of the Middle East.

And thirdly, the Commonwealth was able and willing to use its power. For the free nations of the Commonwealth were of similar culture and mind. Though they might have their moments of hesitation in practice, they had in principle no inhibitions about using their combined power for—as they usually agreed in seeing it—the good of the world as well as the Commonwealth. The unfree nations, including India, Pakistan (as it now is), Burma, and Ceylon must follow where the free nations led.

There were, of course, commitments in which, formally, one member of the Commonwealth might be involved but not another. The *Entente Cordiale* between Britain and France, for instance, did not formally bind the other countries of the Commonwealth. But the decisive factor in entering into or retaining any commitment which might involve calling for support from the Commonwealth as a whole was the opinion of the Commonwealth as a whole. The primary commitment of each Commonwealth country was to the Commonwealth.

It may be that we overestimated the strength of the Commonwealth even then. However that may be, it is certain that each one of the conditions on which the power-political greatness of the Commonwealth rested has been whittled away since the second world war.

In one of the world's three trouble-centers, Europe, the Commonwealth—meaning here in effect Britain—is a second-class power, outclassed by the USSR. It is a little difficult to say what sort of position the Commonwealth holds in the Mediterranean and Middle East; but it is certainly neither a happy nor a strong one. In the Far East the Commonwealth is potentially still a Great Power. But "potentially" only; for one nation, Burma, has left the Commonwealth altogether, and India and to a less extent Ceylon and even Pakistan have proved to have very different ideas from Britain and the older Dominions on the extent to or the way in which the power of the Commonwealth should be used. The old resolution and unity in action has gone.

A sharp division is also growing up between the Afrikaans whites of South Africa and the other peoples of the Commonwealth. And yet other divergent opinions may well emerge as and when new black or multiracial Dominions appear in Africa, Malaya, or the West Indies. And all these various changes, especially those in Africa, the Middle East, and round the Indian Ocean, have also weakened Commonwealth communications. It is doubtful, indeed more than doubtful, whether the Commonwealth will much longer be able to guarantee the safety of communications between its two major centers in Northwest Europe and Southeast Asia; if indeed it is able to do so now.

THE Commonwealth as a unit, on this reckoning, hardly sounds like a Great Power. *As a unit;* please underline this. For it may well be that it is precisely in treating it as a unit when it no longer is one that the weakness lies. It is possible that the Commonwealth as a whole would be a stronger and more useful force in world affairs if its components acted more on their own, or even saw their primary commitments as lying elsewhere.

There seem likely to be during the next generation about five Great Powers or potential Great Powers;

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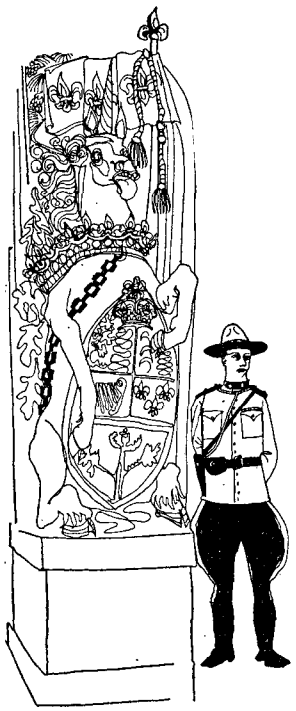
countries or groups of countries strong, compact, and resolute enough to measure their forces with any other such group in one or more of the world's trouble centers. North America and the USSR are already Great Powers. China is very near it. Western Europe could quickly become one, given —and indeed only given— British leadership. Southeast Asia might also become one, given—and, once again, only given—effective Indian leadership.



Here are two areas out of five in which the major Commonwealth countries can play a Great Power role and decide the issues of peace and war. But the condition is that they must go to work separately, and make their primary commitments not to the Commonwealth but to Europe or Asia as the case may be.

It becomes clearer every day that the only sort of commitment to Europe which will give Britain the right sort of standing on the Continent, and will help Europe sufficiently to find itself, is one which is full and irrevocable. And it also becomes clear that, whereas Indian leadership plus friendly aid from other Great Power areas *might* add up to an effective policy for Southeast Asia, leadership from the Commonwealth, which seems to so many Asians to subordinate Asiatic countries to a policy made in Britain and the older white Dominions, can never do so.

The leading countries of the Commonwealth would thus be divided, one being primarily committed to a (largely non-Commonwealth) group in Asia and the other to a mainly non-Commonwealth Western Europe. But is that not a counsel of despair? Does it not mean breaking down one of the few really effective links between East and West? I think not.

IN the first place, the Commonwealth would still keep its importance for cultural cooperation (think of that mass of Dominion and Colonial students in British universities—though we ought to be sending more the other way as well) and for economics. I would not stress the economic side too much. One reason for bringing Britain fully into Western Europe is precisely that the Western European countries, in Benelux, the Coal-Steel Community, and elsewhere, have brought themselves to the verge of a much more intimate and fruitful economic integration than has shown any sign of emerging from the Commonwealth Conferences. But there are problems of aid to underdeveloped territories, of long-term contracts to stabilize primary product markets, and generally of trade and development, on which Commonwealth or Commonwealth-European cooperation can still prove effective and very valuable. And even at the military and political level, the Commonwealth can remain a useful agency for contact between the Great Powers. Including Canada and the West Indies, it reaches into three of the Great Power areas. Australia and New Zealand, for example, situated on the edge of Southeast Asia but sharing many of the ideas of Europe or North America, have a great future as a bridge between these three worlds.

And secondly, if Britain makes its primary commitment in Europe and leaves the leadership of Asia to Asians, that does not mean that Britain will cease, on its own or through Europe, to have an effective voice and hand in Asian affairs. It may mean the exact opposite.

We can all see the mote in our brother's eye more easily than the beam in our own. Suppose you asked a British audience today whether the French would have a more or a less effective voice in Asia if they concentrated on building up a powerful Europe, friendly to but having no colonial claims on Asia, and if meanwhile they pulled out of Indochina or remained there only on the same basis on which Americans remain in Korea—you would not be left in much doubt about the answer. And what is sauce for the French is sauce for the British as well.

So perhaps "The End of the Commonwealth" is too strong. There is no need for the Commonwealth to end, and many reasons why it should not do so. May the day be long in coming when the Queen is not as welcome in Sydney, Tonga, or Kingston, Jamaica, as she is in London, or when the foreign ministers of England and India cease to work as closely together as they have done over Geneva and Indochina. But what does need to end is the idea that the Commonwealth as a unit is a Great Power: that it is and should act as a unit: and that it is somehow disloyal to the Commonwealth and the world for a country belonging to the Commonwealth to bestow its primary commitments elsewhere.

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The Catholic in a Democratic Society

WINNER OF THE COMMONWEAL'S THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY AWARD FOR AN ESSAY BY AN UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENT

JOSEPH E. IMBRIACO

AMERICAN Catholicism and the American democratic ethos are both facts of contemporary American society. The relationship that should exist between the Church, the Catholic, and the democratic society, however, is a problem not easily explored, although one basic to understanding American life today. Many aspects of the problem are evident: the role of Catholic pressure groups; religion in public education; government censorship; and the contribution of the Catholic to the political and economic, intellectual and cultural life of the democratic community. A Christian humanist and personalist view of man and society seems to be the approach most basic to understanding the real significance and possibilities of the relationship between the Catholic and democracy.

The ideals and values of democracy can be realized only in a society which affirms values of the mind and spirit as well as those of material progress; it is a society which has a reverence for the human person in his dignity and uniqueness, in all his psychological and spiritual fulness. But it is only in living as a Christian, sharing the life of the Church, that the formation of the human person is most perfectly achieved, and, with it, the growth of that sense of community so basic to social life.

Many will argue against this: they will say that a democracy cannot make as a condition for entrance or participation in its life a particular philosophy or theology or socio-political ideology. And certainly, it is true that if the concept of modern democracy means anything at all, it means primarily a political and social form and not a doctrinal system.

In fact, the source of much apparent tension between the Catholic in the Church and in the democratic society lies precisely in this point: that, while in the social life of the Church, the Catholic is committed to a body of well-defined doctrine, the same person also lives in a civil society in which there is no consensus on explanations of reality—and none is insisted upon. Men differ in the theoretical explanations of social and metaphysical realities. What they must agree on, however, are the basic practical principles of action. In other words, the democratic society does not presuppose uniformity in doctrine or ideology. It is rather a complex of socio-political processes—ways of doing things—through which the individual can realize freedom, justice and temporal well-being for himself, and through which the social body can achieve the good common to all.

The modern democratic state is characterized by the freedom with which men act, think, and express the integrity of their convictions. Through chosen representatives, men govern themselves, securing government responsive and responsible to their general will. Both freedom and the exercise of authority are limited by processes of restraint. In short, men endeavor to exercise and safeguard their liberty and to determine policies of government through processes of participation, discussion, election, control, and decisions based on general consent. Through institutionalized processes, ordering men's relations with each other, the democratic political form also attempts to secure justice for men and groups.

IMPLICIT in this characterization of democracy in terms of processes, however, is an affirmation of such fundamental values as the inherent dignity of the human person, the moral equality of men, and the moral right of authority. This affirmation or awareness of values may not be explicit; often it is not. But, however unconsciously, these spiritual values must be assumed in the social order—if there is to be any validity to the claim that there is a certain rationality in the development of the democratic ethos. Thus, the trust and respect for the people expressed in the democratic processes makes no sense at all unless the society affirms a certain element of goodness and dignity, and an independence of spirit in man, with inalienable rights as a person, a citizen, and a member of the society in general.

At the same time that the society admits the existence of the uniqueness and distinctions between persons, it must also base its political processes on the fact of man's moral and essential quality. A society of free

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men, in which government is not merely negative and coercive, but is a positive force for social welfare, seems to suggest, in addition, at least an implicit acknowledgment of the moral right of authority—a good inherent in the very nature of social life. In reconciling the private good of men with the good common to society, such authority is competent to place moral imperatives on men. These are only a few of the basic assumptions of value implicit in the processes constituting the modern democratic society.

It is in terms of these values that the American democratic ethos reveals its greatest weaknesses. Materialism, hedonism, and a commercialization of the most personal and spiritual realities characterize our society. Preoccupation with the pursuit of wealth and the struggle for industrial and financial prowess has certainly been a major factor in America's ascent to power, but it has also been accompanied by a subordination of such spiritual values as liberty, justice, the inviolability and sociability of the person, intellectual inquiry and artistic creativity. Spiritual forces such as these—not man's drives for power and economic security—constitute the social dynamism of most democratic institutions.

BY affirming the reality and primacy of spiritual values and the dignity and worth of the person as an individual and as a member of society, the Christian tradition can be a source of life and strength to democratic institutions. The whole dynamics and ordering of the democratic life must center in the individual human person. The life which inspires political and social movements originates in the free initiative, the inner energies, reason and conscience, and creativeness of the person. In him are the most valuable springs of political life, as M. Maritain has pointed out. In the person the temporal and spiritual demands of human nature meet; it is in him where harmony must first exist, and there where the beginning of the vitalization of civil society by Christian values must take place. This is what is meant when it is said that the Christian view of society must begin with the reality of the human personality, and its complementary fact of existence, the community.

By "human personality" we mean much more than the individuality of men: we mean man as a fully-realized person; someone unique in himself, conscious of his one-ness and of his continuing self-realization in all his psychological and spiritual dimensions. The person is a self-centered unit; he can encompass the universe within himself with knowledge and give himself freely to others through love; yet he knows that he can never really give himself completely, for deep inside there is something fixed, essentially inviolable. All of this follows from the fact that at his core, the person is a spiritual reality—and it is the freedom of the spirit which impels man not only to develop interiorly in his own way, but also to live and develop in the external worlds of things.

In one sense, the person is a world in himself; and yet, he is conscious of his essential relationship to every other person and his necessary existence as a member of society. A sense of one-ness with other men unites him but does not swallow or violate the individual in society. A true community is as primary a fact of existence as is the individual person; in fact, it can only exist as a living relationship between fully-formed persons.

These, then, are the two poles of existence: person and community. Man is by nature both a person and a member of the community. The two realities do not merely co-exist—they exist *in* each other. Society exists as a living seed in man's individuality; and the individual, in turn, is the necessary foundation of society. "It is only," writes Cardinal Suhard, "when units with their individual centers and a life of their own come together that there can arise that unity, unique in its tension and flexibility, stable, yet rich in the intrinsic possibility of development which is termed a community."

In the formation of the human person the individual's life as a Christian, and particularly, his life in the Church, has a far-reaching impact on society. As Father Guardini has pointed out so powerfully, for the Catholic, the Church is the 'way to personality' and to a consciousness of community. Cut off from the life of the Church, the person withers and starves—losing that vitality and one-ness essential to social life. Only in the Church can the Christian realize his full nature—emotional, psychological and spiritual. To say this may seem to many to indulge in platitude. Such an attitude, however, is blind to the fact that the Church is a real society, established by Christ, in which men live and move as truly as they do in civil society. If man is to share the life of the Church, he must mature and grow, expand his view of reality; he must live with his complete being in the Church, and yet in the world of men and things. In the Church, man comes into contact with God in the unique way which his personality requires.

The Church, too, is a community in which men are united with Christ and with other men in prayer, in truth, in responsibility and suffering, and in redemption. It is in the Church that man's spirit is most perfectly free—that true freedom of the person which is realized only when the uniqueness of man's individual being is allowed to emerge and determine all that he is and does; when he lives from the center of his being, in complete harmony with the divine idea of his personality. By "plunging" himself in the life of the Church, then, the Christian will grow in the fulness of his personality, in his sense of solidarity and community, and in the freedom of his spirit.

This is the Christian view of man—in his dignity, the fulness of his being, formed in the life of the Church, perfected by grace—the personalism and Christian hu-

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manism which has been given such meaningful expression by such thinkers as Mounier, Maritain, Guardini, von Hildebrand, and Suhard. It is a view of man and of society which has become increasingly real to us and relevant to democratic social thinking.

When man is thought of only as an individual, and not as a fully-developed person, social life becomes a merely mechanical process; the community is an aggregate of atoms, with each individual going his own way. One of the characteristics of the American spirit which has weakened the democratic social life is an exaggerated emphasis on aggressive individualism, indifferent to the corporate life and good of the community. Another social philosophy equally destructive of democracy is that which completely obliterates the individuality of the person, levelling all distinctions, reducing the person to a counter in a mass society.

WE have perhaps belabored the obvious in emphasizing the importance of a true reverence for the person in society; but no ideas or values can bridge

the gap between intention and political reality except through the middle term of the person, participating in the processes of political and social life. In a democracy, it is the person who directs political life and determines its norms and values. At the same time, however, this same person is a member of the Church, sharing in the life of the Church and being formed by the Church. Here, then, is the Church transforming and vitalizing a democratic society—through the human person, who, the more Christian he becomes, implements the principles and values of Christianity in society, prolonging the spirit and influence of the Church in the political order.

The really Christian democracy is one which is Christian by the very spirit that animates it and gives shape to its structure. The human values of Christianity become incarnate in the social order by virtue of the interior forces developing within the people, springing up from them, and given voice in processes of consent and participation. Here is a suggestion of the medieval idea that the source of law is the consensus of the community. The vital energy for dealing with social and political problems arises from the creativity of the human person and the consciousness of community within him. Such a democratic society does not merely *appear* to be Christian—for its principles are not imposed upon it by means of external pressures—instead, its very *form* is Christian.

As a socio-political dynamism, the Christian can bring to the democratic society a deep awareness of what man really is. This insight into the true nature of the human person is necessary if men are to cope realistically with social problems and human relations. To know man as he is and as he can be, as half-brute and half-angel, a participant in original sin and a sharer in divine grace—is to be able to approach society with a realistic sense of the possibilities of human perfection and social progress.

It is only necessary to examine the radically different view of man current among the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "ideologues of democracy" to appreciate the social and political implications of what man thinks he is. A society which has a rationalist optimism in the natural goodness and perfectibility of man and ready changeability of the society will soon find its neat and visionary social programs crumble before reality. Out of the Christian humanist tradition, men can bring realism into the direction and life of democratic society.

Through political activity, Christians can achieve a certain amount of conformity between the demands of their consciences and the political realities. Such will be a society which recognizes and protects the person's right to his own existence and that of his family; to freedom of conscience and to the expression of his conviction and creativity. Precisely because of their respect for the person, men will admit the existence and respect the uniqueness and differences of other men. A Christian democracy will give individual men the freedom and opportunity to declare their own nature and to live as persons.

Man is also a member of the political community proper, and, as such, will have further rights and responsibilities: to participate in government, to vote, to accept the responsibilities of public service, to work for and respect the administration of justice, and an obligation to promote the good of the society as a whole. A true Christian society will affirm man's social rights to private property, to a living wage, and to join freely those groups which express his common needs and satisfy his basic desires.

A PERSONALIST view of man is expressed politically not only in a constitutional assertion of man's rights and responsibilities, but also in a certain ordering of society—as a complex of small groups and communities, active, independent, yet inter-woven in their functions, rights and authority. Such a pluralist society

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is the natural expression of the differences and spontaneity of individual men and of the social groups they form—each group developing and existing, independent, yet united into a flexible socio-political composition.

Instead of a complete vacuum between the individual and the government, there is a whole structure of active social units—professional, occupational, cultural, political, recreational, social groups—each with a life of its own, giving strength, resiliency, and vitality to the community as a whole, performing those functions which can best be done independently of the state. Here is a unity and strength in diversity, for society is most perfect when its parts are full of life and free initiative. It is in such a social structure that the freedom and spontaneity of the person, and his community-consciousness are best expressed and preserved.

To forget either the person or his life in community groups is to sacrifice unduly to the central authority of the state prerogatives and an autonomy which belong only to the person in himself and in his social existence.

Probably every political problem can be resolved into a discussion of the relation between freedom and authority. And it is in this context that a personalist-pluralist society has its greatest significance for a democracy. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the value of freedom for man as an ethical as well as a social and political necessity if he is to live a truly human life. Yet law and authority are also intrinsically necessary to social life, and whoever denies this denies the whole foundation of social order, without which men cannot be free.

Where authority does not reside exclusively in the state but is distributed among so many community groups, as in a pluralist society, and where there is a true regard for the human person, men are protected against an excessive appropriation of function and authority by the state; and, yet, also preserved from an individualistic expression of liberty.

Lord Acton once remarked that "he who deems he can advocate the cause of religion without at the same time advocating the cause of freedom is no better than a hypocrite and a traitor." The freedom of the Church and the primacy of the spiritual is as integral a principle in a pluralist democracy as is a recognition of the autonomy and right of civil authority. Because of what it is by nature, the Church must be able to act freely in spiritual affairs and in those spheres of human life in which both temporal and spiritual intermingle. We have already intimated the mode of the Church's action in a democracy—through the human person who is both a Christian, sharing the life of the Church, and a citizen, participating in the social and political processes of democracy. Free from legal restrictions (or political patronage, for that matter), relying on inner resources and the well-springs of her own life, the Church should be free to declare her own nature and to be whatever She is: to teach, to govern and sanctify. In addition, a pluralist democratic society must recognize the freedom of different religions to coexist, with equal rights to govern themselves according to their own principles.

IT is significant that when societies begin to deny the freedom of the Church and the supremacy of the spiritual the foundations of civil liberty and a true personalist democracy become subverted. In setting before men the ideal of a society in which law and civil authority were omnipotent and omnicompetent, independent of any other reality or source of morality, the eighteenth-century "democratists" divinized the secular order. The laicized state of continental democracy was a self-enclosed, solipsist society-state. It substituted for the principle of the supremacy and freedom of the spiritual a political religion and a social and juridical monism. Such a rationalization of democracy destroys the metaphysical foundation of true freedom and the inherent rights of the person, making the values implicit in democracy meaningless.

American constitutional democracy, rooted in the Anglo-Saxon democratic tradition, has never been characterized by the doctrine that the temporal and political is the whole of reality. The First Amendment is a recognition of the primacy of the spiritual life of the human person as a value supreme over any values incorporated in the state. The American state is a lay state in finality and function—i.e., it acknowledges the existence of a spiritual power in society beyond the competence of the state, and it realizes that the primacy of the spiritual is best protected by an ordered system of civil liberties and by a mode of contact between the church and the state through the middle term of the citizen-of-religious-conscience.

American democracy, in fact, draws upon a long tradition of constitutional government and respect for men's liberty and dignity—a tradition which could be a strong bulwark against forces of subversion and radicalism, if Americans had a great consciousness of the past. Part of the American spirit, however, is an un-

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willingness to respect the continuity of history. Many of us join with Henry Ford in his dictum that "history is bunk." As a Christian and a member of the Church, however, the person must grow in a sense of reverence for tradition and for the historical roots which constitute part of the substance of his life in the Church and in society.

Projected into the political order, this attitude is expressed as an appreciation of the complexity and struggle involved in the historical development of modern democracy. To be socially operative, the political system must arise from the culture and tradition of the society. To the extent that the democratic state is a product of historical forces and experience, the "Christian democrat" must realize that society cannot be reconstructed *ab ovo,* by imposing upon it abstract forms of cold reason. Even in implementing Christian values in the social order, men must recognize the refractory quality in human nature, and not anticipate perfect conformity between principle and reality.

Equally important as his reverence for tradition, the Christian living in a democracy must look to the future and to achieving through social change greater correspondence between the demands of his conscience and the political order. Complacency is as self-destructive in society as it is in the person. In making its present condition the measure of its perfection, the society practically divinizes itself, and becomes incapable of directed progress. The Christian, alive to a cosmic view of reality and value, should be aware of a vision of a possible society always more truly Christian than the present. The tension between this respect for historical continuity and the need for social change is an extremely delicate one; but only when the two forces are balanced can the rights and freedom of the person and social order be preserved.

THE relationship between the Catholic and the democratic community in which he lives, as must be evident by now, is an elusive one. Certainly this essay has been no more than an attempt to explore only a few of its implications. The problem resists formalistic treatment, for at the center of the relationship is the wonderful and mysterious reality of the human person, who, in the one-ness of his being, really lives both in the Church and in the democratic society. In him the two societies meet, either harmoniously or discordantly.

The true meaning of democracy can be realized only in a society in which men are not merely individuals, but fully-developed persons—unique, yet intrinsically related to other men. We must make our conception of society and of the individual personality adequate, harmonizing the self-consciousness of the person with a sense of the interdependence of men in social life. This is the point at which Christianity and the life of the Church have greatest significance for the democratic society—in the formation of the person and of a sense of community.

What democracy can offer the Christian social form is not merely a particular and perhaps less oppressive process of distributing and exercising authority. Neither is democracy's chief claim to glory, as Americans are prone to think, that it has made men rich and comfortable and our country powerful. It is rather that "it has contributed to the dignity of all men," as John U. Nef once wrote. Democracy is committed to the freedom of the person—in religious worship, political life, philosophical and scientific enquiry, and in artistic expression. The appeal which democracy makes to the person is for service to the community and growth as a person —in responding to the values of the mind and spirit.

Here is the inner energy of democracy and of the Christian social order. To contemplate this truth is to be filled with awe at the responsibility and opportunity confronting the Catholic in the democratic society. For the first time in modern history, men, as persons formed in the Church and participating in the processes of a democratic society, can be the source from which the Christian spirit and values become incarnate in society —not imposed from without, but springing up from the interior creativity of the person and the community.

THE SCREEN

LET'S NOT BE BEASTLY TO QUEEG

THE film version of "The Caine Mutiny" suffers only by comparison. Moviegoers who have not read Herman Wouk's novel (are there any?) or have not seen the play which Wouk wrote about the court martial episodes will find the film an exciting account of life during World War II on an old minesweeper—first under a seemingly lax captain who has to spend most of his time keeping this "beaten-up tub" afloat, and then under a strict by-the-book captain who also happens to be a psychoneurotic with an obsession for detail. Needless to say, life on the *Caine* is less pleasant under this second commander but much more exciting in an unpredictable way since the officers and men never know what screwball thing Captain Queeg will do next.

Stanley Kramer has given his film an excellent production in which the Navy (and even the National Park Service) cooperated. And Edward Dmytryk has directed his large cast well. I suppose the screenplay (written by Stanley Roberts, with additional dialogue by Michael Blankfort) is as good as can be expected since it had to please Kramer, the Navy, author Wouk

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and many other people, but it lacks the forceful vitality of either the original novel or the stage play; and the film's total effect suggests compromise rather than clear-cut freshness and strength. The film's weaknesses, however, are not all due to the script.

The central, although not the most important character in Wouk's novel is Willie Keith, a mama-mufflered baby-faced Princeton graduate who starts out as an ensign on the *Caine* and winds up as her last captain. The events on the *Caine* including the mutiny and court martial in which he is involved change the boy into a man; by the end of the book, he is able to cut the silver cord and ask the night-club singer with whom he has been carrying on a sort of back-street affair to marry him. The film, no doubt wisely, slights this love story and gives just enough of it to indicate Willie's growing up. But with the character of Willie the film runs into a problem that remains unsolved. At first glance Robert Francis, with turned-up nose, naive expressions and boyish manners, seems just right in the role of Willie, but at the film's end Willie is still cute, naive and boyish. The hectic experiences aboard the *Caine* haven't changed him a bit.

Perhaps it is wrong to insist that a movie adhere to its source, but in the case of such a widely read book as *The Caine Mutiny,* readers are going to expect a certain amount of faithfulness. In the role of Maryk, the executive officer who relieves Captain Queeg, Van Johnson gives one of the finest performances of his career, but still fails (and this is the fault of the director) to convey the warm, big-bear qualities that made Maryk so loved by his men. Fred MacMurray is excellent as Keefer, the flip would-be novelist who goads Maryk into believing that Queeg is a paranoid and should be relieved of command. By toning down some of the characters from the novel, Keefer's role takes on greater importance; and this is as it should be to furnish motivation for Keefer's failing Maryk during the court martial and for the lawyer Greenwald's intense hatred of Keefer during the later banquet scene. (The stage play muffs this scene by slighting Keefer earlier.) While José Ferrer is effective as the defense lawyer during the court martial, the script goes so far out of its way to defend Queeg that it almost seems to suggest that Maryk and the other officers were wrong in not sticking by their captain no matter how erratic his behavior.

Humphrey Bogart makes Queeg a difficult, psychologically confused but nevertheless sympathetic person. He conveys a captain's loneliness and stresses little of this particular captain's meanness. He almost pleads for companionship and understanding. And when he breaks down during the court martial and exposes his unstable mental condition for all to see, he demands and gets pity. Although Lloyd Nolan's performance as Queeg in the Broadway version is more striking than Bogart's in the court scene of the movie, it must be remembered that Bogart had the more difficult task. He had to display Queeg throughout the many moods and situations of the film. Queeg's collapse and babbling as he accuses all his officers of disloyalty is in keeping with what went before; and Bogart deserves applause for a well-rounded portrayal.

"The Caine Mutiny" is by no means dull. Handsomely photographed in Technicolor, its scenes of Navy maneuvers are done on a big scale; and Stanley Kramer deserves credit for attempting to turn a popular book into a movie that is bound to have severe critics and admirers. Perhaps Wouk's sprawling novel was almost too hard to film—especially if the finished product had to please everybody, including the United States Navy.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"TECHNICS AND TOTALITARIANISM"

Los Angeles, Calif.

TO the Editors: I am quite gratified, as are, no doubt, many of us, to see Professor Wilhelmsen's article "Technics and Totalitarianism" so well answered by both Mr. Noel Deisch and Mr. R. V. W. Todd [May 21]. Mr. Deisch wields the duster of his light wit so expertly that all Mr. Wilhelmsen's cobwebs are dispelled with ease.

However, Mr. Todd gets down to cases when, on the grounds of philosophy, he indicts Mr. Wilhelmsen of "intellectual vices" and lack of semantic discipline. Leaving the field of philosophy and using Erich Fromm's fruitful "Escape from Freedom" thesis, he suggests for our consideration that Mr. Wilhelmsen's distaste for "technologized science" may be nothing else than a fear of personal responsibility in the world of today. As to the correctness of this diagnosis—that we leave to the experts.

But the thing which I am particularly interested in is a theological analysis of Mr. Wilhelmsen's ideas. I wonder what an analysis from that vantage point would yield?

I wish I could lay my hand on an article which Mr. Wilhelmsen wrote for The Commonweal last year [Feb. 20, 1953]. I think he called it "The Conservative Catholic." And if I remember correctly he let us Catholic Liberals in on what made Christian Conservatism tick. About the only part of the article I remember (and this doesn't reflect on the article but rather on my memory) was a charge that we Catholic Liberals were using the term "incarnational theology" as an excuse for doing all sorts of things which were nefarious or at least imprudent in our relations with our non-Christian contemporaries.

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We were supposed to be playing fast and loose with something or other which Mr. Wilhelmsen (and I suppose Donoso Cortes and Joseph de Maistre, to drop some names) would probably identify promptly as Christian Conservatism or—in less expansive moods—Christianity period! In his earlier article Mr. Wilhelmsen claimed that we were playing semantic tricks on the Conservatives by using the above term, thus removing ourselves from the suspicion we so richly deserve!

Whatever it does, Mr. Wilhelmsen's article, both by itself and as taken expertly apart by Mr. Todd, should prove once and for all whose theology is incarnational and whose isn't.

The two points I want to make are these:

1.) Mr. Wilhelmsen's theology is radically out of key with the dogma of the Incarnation both considered in itself and, especially, in its socio-cultural implications.

2.) Possibly it is on the theological level that we should look for the root cause of Mr. Wilhelmsen's intellectual vices and, more particularly, his attempted "escape from freedom."

The basic theological fault of Christian Conservatism is to look continually *backwards* to Utopia Christiana—against the Judaeo-Christian grain. It doesn't matter whether we look backwards to the first century (with certain Protestant intellectuals), or to the thirteenth century (with the vulgarizers of Thomism), or (with Port Royale) to the ante-Nicene Fathers, or, even, if we *care* to—God save the mark!—to "1888 Barclay Street" and Saint Anthony of Padua in plaster (with the Catholic Bourgeoisie). As I say, it doesn't really matter. Not at all! Just so long as we agree to look *backwards,* we can all be Christian Conservatives in good standing. . . .

The author's fussing about the fact that contemporary science is busy at work understanding the physical cosmos may be put down as one of the results of an off-key theology which does not fully grasp the meaning of the dogma of the Incarnation.

Granted that Mr. Wilhelmsen may not like cybernetics and electronic engineering. Granted that nuclear physicists and urban sociologists and assemblers of jet turbine engines leave him cold. All this we grant. That is his right. But, nevertheless, is it really necessary to have to descend to the obvious and remark banally that they have come to stay?

This is definitely—and Mr. Wilhelmsen is quite correct in noting it—the age when "technologized science . . . is charged with the power . . . even to absorb the physical cosmos itself within a new world created by the genius of mathematicized science." But, I submit, is there any reason for Christians to work themselves up into a lather about it? The new world which Mr. Wilhelmsen fears so much is nothing else than another new world into which Christ is to become incarnate, to phrase it after Saint Paul.

Mr. Todd confesses himself "surprised and disappointed" that The Commonweal could open its pages to such "authoritarian" and "morbid nay-saying." To him, I say: don't make the mistake of thinking Mr. Wilhelmsen "dangerous" or "seductive." He is merely mistaken, like all Conservatives. If he were a Secular Conservative he would lament the "passing of nature as man found it." But since he is a Christian Conservative he laments the "passing of nature as God gave it." The lyrics differ slightly but the melody is the same. People of that turn of mind are not dangerous and sooner or later they adjust themselves to the present, even if the present is just about to become the past. . . .

Now, I ask Mr. Wilhelmsen frankly, is he going to face the obvious facts of twentieth century life and turn his attention, with the rest of us, to the problems of extending the Gospel to biochemists, meteorologists, clinical psychology majors, lab technicians, electronic engineers, aircraft sheet-metal workers, government lawyers and the growing world of experts and specialists who are fully and often delightfully human persons? . . .

If he will we can guarantee him a rewarding and fascinating apostolate, in the world as "God is giving it to us"—technologized science and all.

The question as to whether or not Technics goes hand in hand with Totalitarianism—as Mr. Wilhelmsen's title archly suggests—may depend largely on what theology is decided upon by the Christian Conservatives when the time comes to encounter Technics.

CHARLES STINSON.

Collinsville, Ill.

TO the Editors: On reading Mr. F. D. Wilhelmsen's "Technics and Totalitarianism" and the subsequent criticism of it by Mr. R. V. W. Todd, I was struck by what seems to me complete misunderstanding of Mr. Wilhelmsen's thesis.

Although one is tempted, on reading such strongly worded articles as this, to discount much of what is said, a closer look shows Mr. Wilhelmsen's to be far less wild than it might seem. Aside from impressions made by the style, one notices that much of the discussion hinges on theoretical considerations; here, it is clear, speaks a man well versed in theory of knowledge, whose words often as not have a stricter sense than one might be inclined to suppose. It is, for instance, pointless to oppose to an analysis of science on a philosophical level a definition taken from some standard dictionary. This is merely another way of saying that the point was missed.

". . . scientific power over a thing is had in proportion to the failure to know the thing as it is. Conversely, a thing is known as it is, when power is relinquished, and the thing is contemplated in its very existence." The point is that "scientific power" must here be taken in a rather technical sense, for it precisely does not refer

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to knowledge of things, but rather refers to the peculiar nature of post-Enlightenment science which strives, not to know, but to make. This in itself is of course not evil at all; but to conceive making *as* knowledge, to forget the distinction between the two, is to make a dangerous error. It is a question of restricting the human mind to reason, to the exclusion of contemplation or the receptive knowledge of things as existing; it is a question, in other terms, of work and leisure. The matter is discussed by Josef Pieper in *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*. In fact, if we look about, we shall find ample background for Mr. Wilhelmsen's statement in Marcel, Maritain, or for that matter in Heidegger. In most general terms, it is here a question of the breakdown of the distinction between the practical and speculative orders. In this particular issue, this means that the ends of technology tend to become more and more intra-technological. In the Christian tradition, work and technics serve the man, and the end of the work is not the end of the man; by saying that technical ends become intra-technological, I mean that the end of the man tends to coincide with the end of the work, reversing the natural order. Technology, in tending to serve only itself, cannot serve man. To put this in a more concrete way, the more a human mind becomes technologized, or *purely* rational, or secularized (the terms are connected), the less human it becomes.

Mr. Wilhelmsen is not opposing science as organized knowledge of the things of the world to knowledge of being, nor is he trying to oppose even technics as a rational method of achieving a certain goal to such knowledge, or to contemplation of existence, since both sorts of knowledge can and do exist in men. But he is opposing, first the *ratio* of technical action to the *ratio* of contemplative knowledge (which amounts to making the distinction between them—hence, too, the baseless charge of reification) and, secondly, he is opposing technology precisely as the chosen instrument of immanentist eschatology, as the instrument of a totalitarian drive to turn the world inside-out, in which technology must be written with a capital "T." And there we have a real reification.

"Modern science is so well adapted for this work of de-humanization that it is sometimes hard to shake off the haunting conviction that totalitarian collectivism is a function of the scientific mind, rather than its master." This is not grounds for jettisoning science at all; it is not a question of destroying science to create anew some pastoral paradise; what must be realized is that modern science is actually of such a nature, so that we shall not be deceived into thinking that it presents a genuine delineation of Nature, the complex of the things which are.

Science as a "structure of symbols," in Mr. Wilhelmsen's words, cannot be brought to mean, as Mr. Todd would have it, an "organization of knowledge by parts." A symbol is not a concept; in a symbol there is no univocal ratio binding together what is and what is known, but rather an analogical likeness. The symbol as produced is art, not scientific understanding. But perhaps most significant is Mr. Todd's assumption that by science we may understand totally the "physical cosmos." It is in science as a symbolic structure that we can have total understanding, not of things, but of the structure itself grasped in the simplicity of its axioms. We can have no total understanding of any really existent individual thing. . . .

"The world as God gave it" ought to be interpreted, not in the sense of some "pastoral Never-Never land," but in a more metaphysical way. Mr. Wilhelmsen opposed technical and mathematicized knowledge to knowledge of being; this "being" is the world as God gave it, and through knowing it we can come to a knowledge of God. "What academic idealism never succeeded in really doing, has been done for it by technology: modern man, where he is most fully technologized, has ceased to believe in the existence of Nature. That he cannot believe in the existence of God is merely a corollary." This does not say that no one believes in God, or that all men are technologized; it is a particular statement of a trend which is dangerous.

The analysis which ends Mr. Todd's letter is interesting apart from its being a criticism of Mr. Wilhelmsen. In Erich Fromm we have an example of that secularized mentality which he is opposing. Since the heart of the matter seems to lie in the alternatives set up by Dr. Fromm, we might note about them this: if it turns out that to accept personal responsibility amounts to a "spontaneous union of the individual with the world as it is," then we can ask if personal responsibility is satisfied when a man is so united to the world. Have we not as Christian men personal responsibilities to God which have nothing to do with such a "spontaneous union," and which are in fact often hindered by it? This secularist analysis sounds as if it might not be wholly unrelated to the world of total work described by Josef Pieper in the work mentioned above, for a world which commands man's personal responsibility to the extent that if he rejects it he is thereby "nihilistic," is a world in which the end of man has been secularized; it is a world in which knowledge in contemplation, never had by all and never had perfectly, is also theoretically unacceptable. Such a world tends to lose even that measure of the peace of God which it might have enjoyed.

Mr. Wilhelmsen, however, has not rejected the world; I suggest reading his book *Hilaire Belloc: No Alienated Man,* for a more positive analysis. Certainly there are "contemporary values"; no age is worthless. We cannot think of destroying "technology," for in the end that would amount to destroying technologists, who are also men. We ought, however, to change, as much as we can, the present center of gravity. . . .

JAMES M. O'KEEFE.

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Vernon Lee, a Lonely Lady

ANNE FREMANTLE

SHE scared me at first, in her mannish clothes, with a striped, starched shirt and tie, short, gray straight sparse hair and gleaming eyes. She looked as Anatole France describes her in *Le Lys Rouge,* "ugly and nice, hair bobbed, a man's shirt covering her boy's chest, almost graceful, with slender hips." She talked brilliantly, and even at the age of seven I loved the crisp way she made words work. She was describing Italy, and made it unimaginably lovely, ruined towers on cliffs over blue seas, with steady cobalt skies above. Why, I thought, looking with distaste out of the open dining-room windows onto our rain-sogged April lawns, more moss than grass, larded with big beds of bedraggled hyacinths, are we here, not there? But Vernon Lee breathed deeply, "Their scent triumphs even over your roast chicken." She smiled at mother, who replied, "You must wait until it clears and we'll walk to Oxpasture and smell the wild ones—they're a blue lake."

"Do let the poor children loose," Vernon Lee begged, seeing we had swallowed down our blancmange (wobbly pudding, ugh). "Can you lend me some stamps?" Mother had plenty, but I ran upstairs to the nursery, found a few of my very own, crept down to Vernon Lee's room, knocked, proffered. She accepted, asked me in, and what was I going to do when I grew up? "Write po'try in It'ly," I replied. "I have never, in all my life, been able to write a single line of verse," she told me. (Later, I found she had written the phrase, adding to it "though I have written volumes, too many, of prose.") She approved of my plan, and asked me if I approved a story she read me then and there, "Prince Alberic and the Snake Lady," which is now reprinted together with sundry of her other magical tales [*The Snake Lady*. By Vernon Lee. Introduction by Horace Gregory. Grove Press. $3.50]. I wept then and still find the story tremendously moving: she has depicted the loneliness of the unloved young prince with grave sympathy, and the snake is delightful. "I felt you would like the snake lady, since your mother loves snakes and wears her little living Aesculapius snake around her neck," Vernon Lee said.

She came several more times to us, always alarming, always enchanting, but, idiotically, I never went to her, in Italy.

VIOLET Paget, who took the pseudonym of Vernon Lee when she published her first book in 1875, was born in Chateau St. Leonard near Boulogne, in 1856, and died at her Villa Palmerino, near Florence, in 1935. Her father, Henry Paget, had been educated in Warsaw and had subsequently become the director of a college for young noblemen in St. Petersburg. But he was suspected of being involved in, or at least sympathetic towards, the Polish insurrection of 1848, and was banished from Russia. He then became tutor to young Eugene Lee-Hamilton, of Welsh (Carmarthenshire) estates, whose widowed mother, Matilda, soon married Mr. Paget. Violet was the only child of this marriage. Her father died when she was four. She and her half-brother were brought up together, partly in Germany, partly in Rome. Violet grew up tremendously influenced by her half-brother. Her pseudonym reflects her affection, as do the dedications of several of her works, and many references to him in them. Born in 1845, his father too had died soon after his birth, and he lived abroad until he went to Oxford in 1864. He was a good poet, skater, dancer; he passed brilliantly into the Foreign Office, and did well there. Quite suddenly, he got some complaint—a "nervous illness" that for twenty years kept him on his back. In the summers he lived with his mother and Violet in Florence, in the winters at Bagni di Lucca with them. Mr. Gregory hints at "family solidarity and intimacy—how much or how little is impossible to say." Certainly young Lee-Hamilton's twenty years of invalidism tied his mother and half-sister to him, but gave the latter her surest critic and mentor. He was a poet, sensitive, witty, with a wonderful gift for conversation.

Suddenly, in 1896, Eugene Lee-Hamilton completely recovered, rushed off to America, where he bicycled madly "like an eighteen-year-old" around Edith Wharton's estate, married a female English novelist, Annie Holdsworth, who bore him a daughter, Persis, in 1903. When Persis died, aged four, Lee-Hamilton followed her from grief.

Vernon Lee, meanwhile, after discovering, before she was fifteen, the deserted meeting-place of the Arcadian Academy in Rome and assembling material for her *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (a pioneer book in its field, published in 1880), produced thirty published volumes in the sixty years between 1875-1935. In "Asolando" Robert Browning praised her powers of observation:

"No, the book
Which noticed how the wall-growths wave

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Was not by Ruskin.
I asked 'Vernon Lee?' "

Maurice Baring wrote that she was "by far the cleverest person I ever met," and she was the only disciple Walter Pater ever acknowledged as his own. Paul Bourget and Henry James pilgrimaged to her, and were proud to be her friends, as were Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Edith Wharton (who only just avoided being snubbed) and James McNeill Whistler. John Sargent did two wonderful portraits of her, one, in oil, now in the Tate Gallery, the other, a drawing, in the Oxford Ashmolean. But perhaps Berthe Noufflard's portrait, painted only a year before Vernon Lee died, is best of all, astonishingly feminine, in a frou of stuffs, showing a face that had achieved quiet before she had everlastingly to accept it.

ATTICUS, in his obituary in the London *Sunday Times,* wrote that Vernon Lee "lived all her intellectual and aesthetic life in a world that recalled a hothouse, but a hothouse produces marvellous flowers." This is hardly true—except about the marvellous flowers. For Vernon Lee, though "she was not a scholar, an archaeologist, nor a professional specialist of any kind" (as Maurice Baring pointed out), yet was no tyro as a philosopher, no mean exponent of aesthetics, and a meticulously accurate historian. In her early *Baldwin, or the Responsibilities of Unbelief,* dedicated to her beloved half-brother, she discusses, in dialogues that Sulpicius Severus might well have enjoyed (set in a countryhouse as were several of the early Christian apologetics) the problems of religion. Her rationalist, Rheinhardt, claims that religious belief to be best which is most conducive to complete intellectual emancipation. He compares Protestantism with Catholicism: "The Reformation was a piece of intellectual socialism. It consisted in dividing truth so that each man might have a little scrap of it for himself, and in preventing its increase by abolishing all intellectual capital." The whole book is tightly thought through. In a later, more purely political book, *Gospels of Anarchy,* dedicated to H. G. Wells, she foresees, prophetically, Nietzsche's fatal and fascist role.

Durham University gave her an honorary Doctorate of Letters, and in 1913 Cambridge University asked her to write an *Introduction to the Psychology of Aesthetics* for their series of manuals of science and literature. This is a brilliant study, postulating many of Dr. Alexander's premises. Her analysis of the word *beautiful* is almost Thomistic. "It implies a satisfaction derived from the contemplation not of things, but of aspects," she concludes. She wrote, too, for Leonard and Virginia Woolf's famous series, the Hogarth Essays.

Vernon Lee paid her first visit to England in 1881, when she was twenty-five, and took it by storm. She seemed the quintessence of European culture, and spoke English, French, Italian, and German equally well. Maurice Baring has described her well in his *Lost Lectures*: "She was a person possessed of the widest range of the rarest enthusiasms. . . . I have never met culture so shot through with imagination." She wrote a book for him, and showed him Florence and the country around Florence, Rome and the country around Rome. He comments too on her appearance, the "tailor-made clothes and the piercing gleam of her intelligent eyes" but would not agree with Anatole France's contempt for the "quattrocentistes"—Italianate Englishwomen—who "for one luminous creature produced how many impossible old maids"—or, at least, Baring would not have included Vernon Lee among them.

In World War I she came in for a good deal of criticism for her uncompromising pacifism. She wrote, during those horrible years, a tripartite drama, "Satan the Waster" (which Mr. Gregory misprints "the Master") dedicated to Romain Rolland. It is magnificent: satirical, dramatic, passionate and pathetic. Satan claims he is the Waster of all human virtue, who, as Milton saw, is able "out of good still to find means of evil." Generosity, courage, patriotism, chivalry, love itself, all are grist to the Satanic mill, and the most awful thing about him, perhaps, is that he is, withal, the arch-bore himself infinitely bored. Bernard Shaw (not, *pace* Mr. Gregory, any more aging than Vernon herself) "cheered [I hardly think he "sat up" as Mr. Gregory suggested—he was not, at that, or any other moment of his life, lying down] the lucidity of her mind and spirit."

IN her last book, *Music and Its Lovers,* published in 1932, she returned to the aesthetic preoccupations of her earlier days. But throughout the twenties, she had been a force in the Union of Democratic Control, and a great ally, politically, of "Goldie" Lowes Dickinson. But her incursions into politics, though perhaps necessary to make her the full, rounded personality she was, were a pity, artistically. Her genius was for places and for people only as figures in a landscape. She is at her best when telling romantic stories, evoking legends, describing associations. For her the most intimate of all relationships was that between human beings and their country, not the Country to which they pledged allegiance, but their landscape, seascape, or streetscape, the soil in which they grew and to which they must return.

Mr. Gregory has chosen happily. "Prince Alberic" is the most sustained of the stories, which anticipate Isak Dinesen perhaps more than (as he suggests) Virginia Woolf; but "Dionea" has a ballet-like classicism, and "Amour Dure" is deeply symbolic of what Italy has always done to Germany, seduced the northerner by the charm of its warmth, crushed the sentimentalist with its classic cruelty. "The Seekers of Pagan Perfection" and

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the "Virgin of the Seven Daggers" might have inspired Ronald Firbank—perhaps they did?—and Vernon Lee's Don Juan is fresh and funny as well as perfectly produced.

It is a pity Mr. Gregory included none of the gentler tales, such as the tender "Sister Benvenuta and the Christ Child," one of the loveliest of her legends, or "Pope Jacynth." Mr. Gregory rightly dismisses her novels, mentioning only *Miss Brown* and *Ottilie,* and not the more mature *Louis Norbert,* and he is also wise in commending as her best single book her biography of the *Countess of Albany*—an enigmatic, frustrated heroine after Vernon Lee's exacting heart.

But Mr. Gregory does Vernon Lee less than justice when he writes of her as having a *Tauchnitz* reputation, and her readers as being "the restless bright young people of the day when Edward the Seventh stepped to the throne." He is impressed—more than Vernon Lee was—that Gertrude Atherton, Edith Wharton and Van Wyck Brooks admired her. Actually, it was Americans like Bernard Berenson who really appreciated her. But Vernon Lee belonged to no *coterie,* she was anything but Bloomsbury or Fabian; she was a pike-shirker from way back. But, o, dear, how Virginia Woolf despised her! In *A Writer's Diary* Mrs. Woolf notes, "Nor can one let the pen write without guidance, for fear of becoming slack and untidy like Vernon Lee. Her ligaments are too loose for my taste." Vernon Lee's own recognition was of the continual need life has to be "phrased, lest it become mere jabber, without pleasure or tension."

Whatever may be the truth about the brother-sister relationship Mr. Gregory rushes in upon so ham-handedly, Vernon Lee made admirable use of her experiences. Between the age when women went into a decline when thwarted and the age when they take to drink or the analyst, there were a group of what must, one supposes, be called successful sublimists. They were what women essentially should be, enchantresses, magicking what bothered them into what delights us. They were the great bluestockings, Mary Robinson, Mrs. Strong, Mary Berenson and Mrs. Leigh-Smith, who kept a prie-dieu at her dressmakers which she essayed when fitting. There were the alchemists too—Elizabeth Wharton, who used the 'insecurity' of her husband's insanity to write the best of her stories, *Ethan Frome* and *The Custom of the Country;* "Elizabeth" who shared her German garden and her English Earl with her sophisticated audience, and, above all, Vernon Lee. Hers was a lonely figure, with no husband to buttress, cosset and trumpet her, as Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield both had, nor any sensations to scandalize and titillate as did those of Elinor Glyn. But she was perhaps the only Englishwoman who ever really absorbed Europe until, by a spiritual osmosis, she exuded it again.

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Spokesman for the Central Importance of the Human Spirit

THE UNKNOWN CHEKHOV. Translated with an introduction by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. The Noonday Press. $4.50.

By DAVID BURNHAM

CHEKHOV is probably best known to the contemporary American public as a playwright. "The Cherry Orchard" and "Uncle Vanya" have been time and again successfully revived; at the time I write, a new revival of "The Sea Gull" has just closed in New York.

Actually, "The Cherry Orchard" was a swan song, first presented on the forty-fourth anniversary of the author's name day. Mortally ill from tuberculosis, he dragged himself to the gala opening at the Moscow Art Theater, and died a few months later. That was in 1904.

His influence upon the theatre has been large. Even larger, however, has been his influence upon short fiction. I doubt that his stories are today widely read by the general public, but the heirs of the type of story he inaugurated flourish in many languages. Some of these heirs have perhaps never read his stories: his influence upon them has been indirect or perhaps not even actual: perhaps it is only that he was the earliest, and still one of the very best, practitioners of a new approach to the short story. In place of the neatly, tightly plotted tale, with or without a terminal punch as in Maupassant and in such of the latter's followers as O. Henry, Kipling and Maugham, Chekhov at his best depicted unendable situations.

Chekhov has been shallowly described as a portrayer of moods. Yes, he does portray moods—but not in the same way that many of his followers, consciously or unconsciously, do. His moods are centered about action. Yet the action is never so important as the people. The action itself, if I may indulge in a seeming paradox, is often inaction—the inability of the central characters to take direct action, to make up their minds, to determine their aims and make progressive, final decisions. But still he is not a defeatist; he speaks for the value and central importance of the human spirit.

This volume is a collection of fictional and journalistic pieces by Chekhov never before collected and in most cases never before translated. English readers who do not read Russian have hitherto needed chiefly to rely upon the late Constance Garnett's translations of two hundred of Chekhov's approximately four hundred and fifty narratives, published in thirteen volumes between 1916 and 1922. Mrs. Garnett was an indefatigable translator from the Russian, introducing us to many first-class writers. But as Mr. Yarmolinsky points out in his introduction to this volume, her on-the-whole accurate translations have suffered from arrangement: the stories are shuffled about and undated: we do not get a clear picture of the writer in development.

Chekhov began his literary career as a hack journalist and contributor to comic magazines. His early stories which appear in this volume are often broadly farcical and little more than anecdotes. Gradually, but not steadily, he becomes more serious and deeper-seeing, although the comic element is likely to crop out at any moment. Whereas earlier his subject matter was most often the peasantry and the petty bureaucrat —equally debased by the tenor of their time — now he concentrates more and more upon the plight of the intellectual, not so much debased as inactivated.

This inactivation stems both from within and without. Chekhov conscientiously (or should one say temperamentally?) abstains from politics. (Parenthetically, one might remark that the twenty volumes of the definitive edition of his works and correspondence was published by a Moscow press between 1944 and 1951.) Born the son of a serf, he disliked bureaucracy. But he understands it. He dislikes but under-

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Of the journalistic pieces included, the best is the abbreviated account of his six thousand-mile trip across Siberia, partly by rail and steamer but chiefly by hazardous coaches, the terminus being the penal colony on Sakhalin Island—this being undertaken when the author was already seriously ill.

Chekhov was rather addicted to the use of substandard speech for comic or other effects, which makes translation difficult. To one unacquainted with the Russian language outside its military terms, Mr. Yarmolinsky's translations appear to be conscientious if not always inspired. His pithy introduction is excellent.

Among the Worker-Priests

SAINTS IN HELL. By Gilbert Cesbron. Doubleday. $3.75.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

THE worker-priest movement in France, which is the subject of this novel, was a special charge of Emanuel Cardinal Suhard, the late Archbishop of Paris. In his famous pastoral letter *Growth or Decline?* Cardinal Suhard emphasized the point that the Church must adapt herself to the unprecedented, tremendous demands of the modern age. *Growth or Decline?* was a cool and lucid appraisal of a double responsibility for religious and lay persons: keeping alive the Church's changeless spiritual core while expressing her compassion in contemporary language and gestures. Easy enough to comprehend when explained in a carefully planned essay, this precarious balance of purposes is subject to serious buffets from both sides in the world of action. Recently, fearing that the equilibrium had been too gravely threatened, the Church has curtailed the activities of the French worker-priests.

Saints in Hell gives an interesting and varied picture of the life of one of these modern metropolitan missionaries. Father Pierre—known to his friends simply as Pierre—takes a full-time job in a factory and lives in a Paris slum district called Sagny. To his house come the destitute people of the district with their housing problems, complaints about unjust wages, personal anguish—so that Pierre's life becomes part of a net of desperate needs and conflicts. Should he say Mass on time (in the evening) or risk postponing it in order to find a place for a poor old couple to sleep in for the night? Should he risk giving scandal by participating in a strike or a union meeting with Communists? Can he expect the regular pastor of the district, a conservative man, to allow a newly-repentant prostitute from Pigalle to stay with the quiet, sheltered young ladies of the convent? How deep can a man of the Church reach into abysses of despair and selfishness without being in grave danger of tumbling into those abysses himself?

The people among whom Father Pierre lives are workers who earn about forty dollars a month and are exploited cruelly by factory owners and landlords. Pierre accomplishes little in bettering their conditions, but comes to feel that by his example in the factory and in the slums he has aroused in some persons a fellow-feeling that they had not known before. He finds that his Communist friends are sometimes too coldly willing to "time" their acts of benevolence to enhance the Party's reputation. He finds also that the constant pressure of daily troubles occasionally causes him to forget spiritual essentials. In the end, after participating as a witness in the trial of an unfortunate drunkard, Pierre is removed from his post by the new Archbishop. He is replaced by another worker-priest, presumably a more cautious man. Pierre returns to similar work in the mines of his home town.

Gilbert Cesbron writes for the most part with a balanced view of the problem of the Church and

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Sagny, and he provides a constant flow of character-types and incidents: the little boy Etienne, whose father beats him cruelly in drunken fits; the bitter anarchist Luis, a Spanish exile, who is killed in an abortive strike demonstration; Jean, a half-religious young man who slashes his wrists but evidently is saved from despair before he dies; even the nameless figure of the great Cardinal, whose death is described in a brief and moving scene. The novel's value, however, lies completely in its topicality. It is important not as a work of art—for the style (even with the translation taken duly into account) is only competent, subservient, occasionally banal, with, strange to say, a smattering of easy pietisms that are at odds with the rough language and sordid milieu—but as a sharp if sketchy outline of one aspect of the Church's modern agony. This is not the work of a Bernanos or a Graham Greene. The spirituality of the Church is assumed, given its "mention," but not energetically depicted as are the unjust sufferings of the poor people of Sagny. Despite its flat characters and simplified construction, though, *Saints in Hell* is worth reading, for it is not dull, and it tells of a human situation and a contemporary problem that is of the greatest importance.

Late Mann

THE BLACK SWAN. By Thomas Mann. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Knopf. $2.75.

By JOHN F. SULLIVAN

THE English romantic poets of the second generation—Byron, Shelley, and Keats—have probably to answer for, among so many other things, the popular concept that artists usually suffer intensely during a brief lifetime and then die before a tardy public acknowledges their talents. There are occasional modern instances of this type of career—like that of Dylan Thomas, perhaps—but in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the tendency has been mostly all the other way, as major literary figures have persisted to almost lugubrious old ages.

No one, of course, advocates either early euthanasia for obstinately health writers or that no one past middle age be permitted to take to pen or typewriter. But the problem of literary monoliths who have outlived their proper time can be a fairly menacing one. The literary scene in both England and America during the latter half of the nineteenth century was largely dominated by men like Bryant, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Whittier, Tennyson, or Browning, all of whom reached well into their seventies and eighties and exerted a powerful but deadening influence long after they had come to the end of their significant contributions.

No such dead hand has been felt in the twentieth century as yet, perhaps because we revere our literary patriarchs less, perhaps because there has been enough variety among them to prevent any hardening into an orthodoxy. Nevertheless, we have had the experience of making room, with some embarrassment, for the late works of George Bernard Shaw and Somerset Maugham, for example—works like *The Adventures of a Black Girl* or *Catalina* which bear little or no relation to the powerful earlier achievement of these writers.

And we may now have to take the same embarrassed tone about Thomas Mann. For his latest story, *The Black Swan* (published in Germany in 1953 as *Die Betrogene*), seems to me to display a very thin ghost of his former greatness. I was immediately tempted to blame the new translator, but, while I think he is inferior to Mrs. Lowe-Porter, I do not see how the blame can be all his. As Knopf has always fitted Mann's American editions with beautiful lists of the previous German and American publications of this author, I was led to think back on other recent works of Mann, and I began to realize that the falling-off is not sudden but has been going on for more than a decade now. It dates, I suspect, from *Joseph the Provider,* which appeared in German in 1943, separated by seven years from *Joseph in Egypt,* the preceding volume in the Joseph series. During that seven years, of course, Mann had made his break with Hitlerism and was devoting himself to immediate political purposes. But *Joseph the Provider* did not at the time seem to me to pick up the right strain again, and perhaps the time had passed when it could ever be picked up.

Like many others, I was bemused by the apparent brilliance of *Doctor Faustus.* But, like *Joseph the Provider,* it moved, I now feel, sluggishly—very differently from the tremendous flow of ideas in *The Magic Mountain.* It is significant, I think, that the latter two took longer to read, though their content was certainly not any more difficult.

Since *The Black Swan* is only a "novel" in the mechanical sense that it is bound by itself in hard covers—it is hardly even extensive enough to be called a novella—it is perhaps unfair to speak of it in the same paragraphs as I speak of the novels. But its brevity makes its shortcomings all the more apparent, and indeed it suffers most in contrast with the great earlier stories like "Death in Venice" or "Tonie Kroger."

The tricks of style, the brilliance of technique are all there—as they are with Maugham, too—and they sometimes deceive one into thinking that behind them lies something either too profound or too simple for us to see. Can there be, for example, some meaning in the identification of the Frau Tummler of the novel with Sarah of the Old Testament? Is the odd naming of the characters more than a kind of childish delight in funny-sounding names? Is the tale a kind of morality of the relations of flesh and spirit, Nature and humankind, told with benevolent irony and calm wisdom? I wish I could answer these questions in the affirmative, but I cannot.

And yet I hope I am wrong in judging this story to be evidence of Mann's failing powers. I hope he will render my diagnosis ludicrous by giving us, in the fullness of his years, a wise and beautiful book, worthy in its own right to share the splendid eminence already long enjoyed by his best stories.

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ALL IN GOOD TIME. By G. B. Stern. Sheed & Ward. $2.50.

By CATHERINE SPURR

HIDDEN among the graces and gifts of baptism (and frequently at odds with them), a convert usually receives the seed of a book. In Miss Stern's case, as a professional author who recognized the limitations of her trade, that seed took seven reluctant years to germinate. The result, however, is a witty, wise and rambling delight.

The basic thread in the story is the familiar discovery of faith; beginning with her first interest (the shaft of a figure in cardinal scarlet before the high altar in Stefanskirche), to her baptism (by one of the most dexterous Jesuits yet met), and through her first seven years in the Church.

There is a fascination in G. B. Stern's prose. The first sentence is interrupted by a chapter-long narrative of her failure to imitate Saint Therese when the housekeeper distracts by tiptoeing in to polish fruit. Or there is the description of a pastime called Desert Island Saints—or who would you pick to be cast away with, Peter the Fisherman and Joseph the Carpenter, and why haven't Chesterton and Baron von Huegel been canonized? A discussion of books kept beside the bed—Knox, Chesterton, Lewis, Ghéon, Bede Jarrett—leads into an account of the restoration of Aylesford, which is abruptly halted by the discovery of the loss of a miraculous medal.

And scattered through these random pictures are occasional studies of the particular gifts of individual saints. Such passages are well worth rereading for meditation—although Miss Stern would probably be startled at the idea—for they so humbly explore the ways which we might practice saintliness. Possibly one of the best is the chapter which traces the acceptance of the will of God through the lives of six saints. Frequently treated as a stark subject, Miss Stern's musings breathe a candor and richness into it when she touches what might have been in their minds and on their tongues.

If there is such a thing as stream-of-consciousness writing, then G. B. Stern, intentionally or not, produces it. And from such a consciousness as hers, such an alive, zestful and curious mind, it is fine reading. Possibly it is unfortunate that this is classified as a conversion story, for many have a vague but real prejudice against such. The basic theme is there, and well done, but this short book's main value and delight is in its crowded miscellany of observation, meditation and narration.

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Personal

Publishers Harcourt, Brace announce that the Commonweal book *Catholicism in America* (published April 30) is ready for a second printing. The book is a selection of the Thomas More Book Club for July and was listed by the New York *Times Book Review* (June 6) as one of the eight outstanding "religious" books published this year.

Samples from reviews:

". . . honest, thoughtful, provocative and, simultaneously, reassuring and disturbing. It cannot be too strongly recommended." —*Jubilee.*

". . . makes highly profitable reading—if read with a sympathetic and discerning mind. It is an important contribution to an important theme."—*America.*

". . . a large contribution to the Church in the U.S. . . . Here is a group of Catholics who are not afraid of the truth. This cannot help but increase the number of non-Catholics who are not afraid of Catholics, who indeed may learn to respect Catholics and Catholicism."—Donald McDonald in the Chicago *New World.*

"(The authors) cover the substance of many of the arguments a U.S. Catholic is likely to get into, and they do it with frankness and not a little abrasive jocosity."—*Time.*

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Summertime will bring no hiatus in The Commonweal's Thirtieth Anniversary Campaign. We must maintain a fast pace during the summer if we expect to enter the crucial fall subscription season with an adequate foundation for success. We respectfully urge our readers who are concerned with the outcome of this subscription campaign to take advantage of the summer to introduce others to The Commonweal, and to obtain gift subscriptions and new subscribers for the magazine.

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